

## Letter from George H. Allen to Alexander Graham Bell, March 31, 1900

Eastern Business Offices NEW YORK, 81–82 Tribune Building. CHICAGO, 87 Washington Street, Room 609. WILLIAMS & LAWRENCE, Managers . The Sioux City Tribune . JNO. C. KELLY, Publishers . Daily And Weekly . The Paper which has the Largest Circulation. Personal Sioux City, Iowa , Mch 31 1 900 Alexander Graham Bell, Washington, D. C. Dear Sir: —

I am personally much interested in the fight that is being made in behalf of the oral method of teaching the deaf, as my case is the best possible living example of the correctness of that method. I have thought it over a good deal and the more I think the clearer it appears to me that I ought to join forces with you and others, if possible.

I n attended a school for the deaf for eight years (combined method) and at the end of the time went out in the world to make a living. The “sign habit” kept me near the deaf and I was always hovering in the neighborhood of the school or communities of the deaf; my speech had be been neglected and I a could not talk with hearing persons, and hated to write. Under this condition I failed to make any headway in the world and ultimately woke up to a realization of what was the matter. I cut I loose from the deaf and went among the hearing; for years I did not see a deaf person; I forced myself to talk till in time perfect speech was mine. Since then I have succeeded in life very well, and am now the editor of this important daily newspaper. Such is the brief sketch of my experience in this respect. Am 35 years old, married to a hearing lady and have three children.

This work t on the newspaper takes up all my time, and much as I 2 would like to work for justice for the semi-mutes who are being incapacitated for the battle of life by the prevailing mistaken method of education, I could not do it without giving up this work here and receiving enough compensation to support my family. I do not care to get rich but

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simply want to help the cause, and are “up against a hard proposition” when it comes to the point I speak of. If you are interested sufficiently and think that an educated deaf man like myself, who can talk as well as anyone, and who has forged ahead solely because he has removed the handicap placed by the sign language, can be of any assistance in a practical way for a year or two, I should be glad to hear from you.

Very truly yours, George H. Allen